

M1574  
Wednesday, April 23, 1969  
New York City  
Group II

Mr. Nyland: So, this will be then our first Group II meeting, again, after a little period when we had smaller Groups also for Group II. And, the reasons why I temporarily, at least, have stopped some of the Groups II you have to understand. Perhaps you do, perhaps you don't. In any event, I thought it was better. Because, several of you I don't know. I would like to know a little bit more of why you come and what you think.

And you have to consider this meeting, now, as if you are at your own little Group ... and I hope that each person belonging to the small Groups is coming to this meeting, and also next week. As you know, we will have, then, the second meeting of this kind; and after that there will be a little period of several of us being away, and what will happen when we come back, that is still in the lap of the gods. For the time being, however, there will be on Tuesday ... during the period that we are on the West Coast there will be a meeting here Tuesday at eight for listening to some tapes of meetings, practically ... uh, only those that were in Boston a few weeks ago. So, those who wish to come can come and listen. And, no questions, no discussions after that. All you come for is listen, after it's over you just leave. I don't think there will be so many questions during that period; although it may be that your curiosity is aroused, and in such a case talk to some who know a little bit more about Work, or perhaps you'll read All and Everything and see if you can find any answers in that.

But whatever it is, and particularly those in the beginning—that is, those we call 'new'—don't be dismayed that even when we talk tonight about certain things you do not understand, you have to realize that perhaps you do not understand as yet. There is in this kind of Work a certain period—and it may last even for quite some time—that you have to get adjusted to the ideas as they are. Because they are a little unusual and you do not know immediately where to

place them, and you will find out that all your old measurements of your ordinary life usually do not apply. And although for your own understanding you will try and to put certain things in words and perhaps for some time the formulation is sufficiently satisfactory, you will also find out if you try to continue to Work that things will change; and that also the ideas that you are quite convinced about in the beginning start to become a little shaky, and then you may start to question “Do I actually Work,” and if I don’t, what is the reason that I don’t.

So, we just continue now as if we are in a small Group and anyone can ask any question you like; with the understanding, however, that since we are committed to the ideas of Gurdjieff, that they have to have—those questions—have to have some relation to whatever you understand as Work, and perhaps they may incorporate to some extent attempts you have made. Because there is no use talking about blue sky and philosophy and things of course that are interesting and also about which you might be quite curious, but when it has to do with ordinary life only, this is not the place we want to discuss it. You can talk about life experiences—which, of course, you have to because you have nothing else. You cannot talk as yet about Objective values, but you can talk about the possibility of an application of something that you consider Objective, more or less, in relation to what you experience in your unconscious state, and with that it may be possible to clarify a little bit more where, really, Work fits in and also where it does not fit in.

So, I would like to ask you: If you have any questions, feel quite at ease. Any question, however small it may be I will try to answer, I hope, sufficiently, and if it is not clear keep on asking until you’re satisfied—or at least, I would almost say until you ‘give up.’

For my side, I won’t give up. Because I am interested in anyone who is serious about his life—who wants to know what to do about it, who wants to find in his life a certain perspective—and that for them these kind of questions become important. Because you can expect that from the knowledge of Objectivity, of Work on yourself—of the creation of what we call ‘I’ or that what may become a guiding force in your life—you can expect from such answers, whenever you now wish to apply them, a very definite result in your life. And if you don’t, then I am afraid either you don’t understand what you have to do, or you have become a little bit too theoretical and are only trying to satisfy your curiosity.

Make a distinction between an essential question and a question that comes only from your mind—and, sometimes, perhaps even from your heart and formulated through your mind, but in any event quite superficial. Questions about your life have to be, of course, serious. They have

to have a certain, you might even call it, ‘dignity.’ That is, if you want to spend the time on asking the question, it has to have a value for you to know if you possibly can find out what the answer might be. And also, you put yourself under a certain obligation. Because whenever you hear anything about Gurdjieff and the ideas and Work, there is an obligation when you hear it that you apply it. It does not mean that you will be able to apply it—or rather, that you know immediately how to go about it—and it may also be quite some time before you find certain results. And the questioning attitude and the doubting, of course will also accompany that kind of an attempt. But, that what is underlying to these kind of meetings is a serious attitude, of something that is certainly not superficial; and when it is serious and it goes deep enough you will find that it must engage part of you ... and in any event that that what you call your ‘feeling’ and if it possibly could become an emotional state in regard to this kind of a wish that you want to have fulfilled in the form of an answer that you then can apply.

I think that it is quite logical that that part of yourself should become apparent in the way you ask, and also in the way you will listen. I will go to any length in talking about Work, from now until Doomsday whenever there is any kind of serious question regarding it. It never will become monotonous for me. Because although I may have asked and answered already a great number of questions, I don’t mind repeating certain things, maybe, in a certain way once and in another way some other time, but there is always a certain genuine desire on my part, if it is possible to help to clarify what may be a little bit vague.

So, we talk about life. We talk about your particular life. We talk about your personality as it is. We talk about the state in which you are when you ask that question, where you have been thinking about it and perhaps that you could not find a kind of an answer that was satisfactory. So, on that kind of a basis you can go ahead and ask. I would ask you, however, when you speak ... because this is now a conglomeration of a variety of different people who don’t know each other and I surely don’t know a great many of you; that you will mention your name for the sake of, let’s call it, a résumé if you can ... if there’s light enough to write it up, and also for me to know where you come from. That is, to some extent I would like to know—and this is, almost I would say, ‘pure curiosity’ on my part—why do you come.

So, whoever wishes, ask.

Yes.

Ben Pontius: My name is Ben Pontius and I’ve been attending John’s meetings for several

months. I think ... I don't know what kind of a question to ask, except that I would like to be given a task. You know, I've heard so much. Um, I think that as far as I can tell, the only good that it does for me to hear more is that it perhaps gives me the proper feeling in me. Sometimes I get that feeling and at other times too, but I don't know exactly what to do sometimes.

Mr. Nyland: What makes you interested in this kind of Work. You see, a person has of course a great many facts about himself, a certain philosophy, a certain form of ethics, a determinant for his behavior. He is thoughtful. He has, of course, feelings, many times in relation to other people. He considers himself alive and he has a wish to continue with his life; and in experiencing and in living what we simply call the 'outer' world or whatever it is that one performs as certain functions, as a human being living on Earth he has his ideas how they affect him, he also knows a little bit how he reacts to them, and out of that comes a very definite attitude which you might even at some times call a 'conduct of one's life.' And that therefore whenever one now is interested in a certain development like this which has not primarily to do with conditions of Earth as I live my life now in an unconscious state, I have to have a very definite reason why I become interested in a rather difficult way of looking at myself ... and the wish to continue with that accumulation of data about myself which I then believe that ultimately may be of use to me.

The reasons why they can be of use can be, of course, two-fold. One is, I find myself in this world and I know it is not entirely correct the way I am, and maybe there are certain things I don't know about how to behave, what to think, how to feel or deal with other people, what time I should spend on what, what kind of aim is right for me; and whatever it may be that I consider myself when I live in this world—in this city or wherever it is that I am engaged in physical work, professional work, all kinds of things that I am interested in—why do I spend the time on that, and how much will I allot to each different activity. This, of course, has to do with an aim that I have for myself over I call it my 'lifetime'; so that when I grew older that I hope that I have reached a certain maturity and that I can consider myself and the rest of the world as a kind of a Man who is this and that, and I try to describe it every once in a while—of what I consider to be an ideal Man for this life and what I hope for and what is justified, what is within my means and what actually I will be able to accomplish. It is an aim that belongs to this world, and I can understand that if I know what I am and actually can count on that what I am and that it is reliable enough, that it doesn't vacillate and change day after day or even go through many

changes during the day, that I would like to have a little bit more knowledge in order to become steadier and more steadfast in whatever aim I may have in mind. This is a very definite, good reason to want to find out what one is, and it is then the acquisition of further self-knowledge without defining immediately what this 'self' is.

Your other is a different kind of an aspect. I find myself, as well as everybody else, on this Earth as a human being and I happen to be here; and perhaps there is a reason why I am here, but I don't know exactly why. Because certainly I was not responsible for myself being here ... and I can, of course, accept the fact that I am alive, I also can have within me a very definite wish to continue to live. And when I think of my life as a whole and having grown up and educated and now becoming more and more mature and experienced, that then after some time I will die and then of course I ask: "What happens to me." The question then is that I consider myself as well as everyone else on this Earth as having a definite function to fulfill in the sense of belonging to humanity or to a certain form of the Organic Kingdom as represented by the different personages which happen to live here; and I, being one, become interested in the kind of a fact that so many people now populate the Earth, and what for. And that the conditions among them—that is, with war and all kind of different things which seem to be sometimes nonsensical and sometimes extremely dangerous and sometimes unknown, even, as a cause or where they will lead to, or thinking about the general condition of the Earth as it is now and of humanity and progress and industry and all the different things that we are engaged in and that give us to some extent a very nice way of living and to make it easier for ourselves—that I start to question this whole problem of the purpose of humanity populating the Earth.

When I look to the outside world, I must come to the conclusion that I am probably exactly the same as anyone else since I am a human being. But when I try to translate it into a terminology of my own world and that what I am as a personality, I also make a distinction between that what is on the surface and which comes out as a manifestation of myself, and that what goes a little deeper and that what I call then my 'feelings'; or perhaps that in this kind of a feeling going deep enough that I become emotionally involved in the existence of myself ... and that then I start to look for a purpose of this life as I have to live it, and then I question whether it is a fact that after I die I will die completely and be, you might even say be 'dismissed.' Because that is against my particular vanity. I cannot understand that I would have to live on Earth and go through all kind of suffering and perhaps solve problems that are difficult to solve, and then at

the point of death that I have to give it up. Then I ask: “What for do I live and why should I continue the way I am doing, and why should I even suffer.”

This particular problem, of course, has to do with the possible evolution of a person; so that when he is on Earth and equipped the way he is and probably sufficient to meet the conditions of Earth, that besides that ... and again I return to my emotional state, that there must be something in me that perhaps could survive, or at least that there is the possibility of reaching a more and a better understanding of the aim and the purpose of my life, and *this* time in the sense that: Do I have to accept the fact that death ends all, or could death have a definite meaning for me of giving that what is the essential part of myself more freedom since it is not any longer bound by my physical body.

That is why I ask, “Why are you interested in Work.” [pause] See, I am perfectly willing to give you a task, but I have to know what for. I can do a task. I can surmount many difficulties. I may have an aim that I want to learn certain things and it may take you ten years before I can learn it, but if I actually wish to learn, of course I will sacrifice a great many things and I will continue until I have learned what I set out to learn.

But again I ask, “What for.” Because if it is in order to be admired or to get a better position or to earn more money, or for myself to have a satisfaction that there was an aim that I accomplished and that then with *all* of that—either knowledge or insight or even perspective of my life—that I can die easier, that would be a motivation but it’s really not the kind of a wish that one is interested in as far as we are concerned. I can live my ordinary life on Earth very well, I don’t have to be Conscious at all. That what I have as a mental functioning and the quantity of feeling I have, is more than enough to get along and to be able to have even relationships with other people. And I can in the ordinary sense of the word become very ... a very kind and respectful old man after some time and I can even marry, I can have children, I can ‘carry on,’ as it were, through my children so that I am not entirely lost but I hope that perhaps my children will follow in my footsteps, etcetera, etcetera.

What is the motivation. Why Work. And if you know why, then the task has to be in order to provide for you opportunities that you can respect. Otherwise, why a task. Try to think about that. I would almost say the task is to think about why you asked for a task, if you are clear about that. And let’s say you have a week now; you can ask it again next week, I’ll be glad to give you a task.

But in the first place, a task must be linked up with something you want to accomplish with the task, and it is not a question of doing the task. It's a question of: In doing the task that I am reminded of something else completely separate from the task. And in the terminology of us we simply say I want to have a 'reminder' to be able to Work on myself or to be Aware; or if I could to Wake Up, or my wish is to acquire Consciousness and a Conscience. For *that* I say it is necessary that in ordinary life I have something that calls to me, every once in a while kind of saying "Don't forget your aim." And if the aim is that I want to try to create an 'I' for myself ... and aside from the fact that perhaps I cannot immediately define why it should be that 'I', it will have to do with the possibility of becoming a different kind of a Man, where, the accent of his life is not on the surface only, but gradually it's placed more and more towards one's inner life and essential, and perhaps even more essential than essence.

So that's the task for you: Really to consider it—what is it that I want the task for—and when you can give that kind of an answer, I'll give you a task.

All right? Not satisfied.

Ben: It's... I've had several months ago an experience of Waking Up which was happenstance. Is it insufficient for me to want to be able to have that experience again?

Mr. Nyland: No. I think that's quite right—provided it was actually a state or experience of Awakening. I think it is not so difficult to have them. The difficulty, however, is when I experience that kind of a state, even if it happens accidentally to me there is very little at that time that functions; so that afterwards thinking about the experience, it's very difficult to describe ... and if I want to describe it and I try really to think about what actually happened, I will know that in the proper state of being Awake accidentally, that really no functions take place of myself, and that I only have the realization of my existence but there were no thoughts or no feelings at that time.

I think if the taste of that kind of an experience is still with one and it is desirable so that I would like to make attempts in order to produce it, then of course I have a perfect right to ask "How can I make these accidental happenings actually the happenings as a result of Work." And when a task is connected with that of course it's correct, but I question still the state of you being Awake. I think there is many times the possibility of mistaking an emotional state, and sometimes quite deep—in which one can lose oneself and sometimes it might even take your breath away—which still remains unconscious. I'd much rather have a result which is so simple

for myself that at a certain moment I discover that I exist; and that there is at that moment no particular thoughts and no particular association with it, and that at that moment I have no feeling, I have no wish to change it. I simply accept the fact that I exist, and if that is what you experience, then I would say I believe you have the beginning of a state of being Aware for one moment.

Try to distinguish, first, between results of Work as you know them and then leading to an experience of what you call 'more Awake' and to what extent actually you are sure that it is that state of Awareness that you then describe, and that it is not a memory of a thought or even a memory of a feeling.

If you wish a task in that sense, when you get up in the morning ... before you actually start to think about your day you just get up and maybe you go to the bathroom, but when you come back that you walk up and down your room, back and forth at least thirty times without any particular aim than just walking and turning around when you reach the wall and come back again. Almost I would say 'aimless,' but only for the purpose that your body happens to walk and without any particular liking or disliking of that kind of a walk, and without having any particular thought of why you walk. Only that the fact is there. The body is walking, and if then at such a time there could be something that you could call the 'beginning' of an Objective faculty becoming Aware of you as a body, as a personality walking back and forth.

You can try this for ten minutes very soon after you wake up. Let me know next week.

Yes.

Bernie Rosenberg: Bernie Rosenberg, Mr. Nyland?

Mr. Nyland: Yes.

Bernie: I was wondering how you can turn the awareness of one part of your mind talking to another part of your mind, into Work.

Mr. Nyland: Wait a minute. What was it? Say it again, please.

Bernie: How do you turn your emotional state—or one part of your mind talking to the other part of your mind—into Work. I seem to be aware of myself, but I can't seem to Work.

Mr. Nyland: Will we define terms first a little bit?

Bernie: Excuse me?

Mr. Nyland: Will we define the terms first? You say you 'seem to be aware,' but you can't Work.



Bernie: Yes. Well, conscious of what I do or what I think.

Mr. Nyland: You would say that the state of Awareness is accidental? Because an Awareness state can only result when I Work in the sense we mean it, if I don't Work I can still experience a state of Awareness for a certain moment which I call 'accidental.'

Bernie: Well, it's mostly accidental.

Mr. Nyland: Well, then why don't you Work.

Bernie: I don't know.

Mr. Nyland: Well, then you don't like the state of Awareness. If you have accidental moments of Awareness and your memory will tell you that you have them and you think about them afterwards, were they desirable or not.

Bernie: They were desirable.

Mr. Nyland: Were they? Were they?

Bernie: I think so. Yes.

Mr. Nyland: Then, have you a wish to try to make them?

Bernie: Not as strong as I would like to.

Mr. Nyland: Then it's not very desirable. It's in direct relation to that. If I want something very much, I'll go after It. If I experience something that is not only useful but exceptional for myself and I think about it afterwards, I can say, "How the hell's name can I bring that about." And to the extent that I have that kind of a taste, to that extent I will have a wish, and if I don't have much of a wish I fool myself thinking that it is desirable.

Try to become clear about that first—if you actually mean it. As you say, that it is 'desirable,' then why don't you go after it. The taste is in direct relation to the wish you might have to have a replica of the same experience. If the experience happens to come to you, you can be fortunate that it happens when it is something that is really beautiful and, as I say, 'desirable'—agreeable, whatever it may be for you. Then there is something in me, that I say "Yes, that I would like again and again if I can, how can I make it." This is my wish. Then someone says, "Try to Wake Up to yourself, try to have something that we call an Objective faculty. It's the beginning of an 'I' which is then watching you." And then if you wish take the same task I gave a little while ago and start Work, but if there is no desire for Work, there is no realization of what I'm after.

Bernie: Well... You see, sometimes there is and sometimes there isn't.

Mr. Nyland: No, no, no, no. There is no maybe about it. Either it is or it isn't. You cannot leave these things wishy-washy. It's a very definite something. There is an aim. If there is an aim that I want to grow, then I will try every possible thing in order to grow. I cannot leave it to my ordinary unconsciousness, because it won't happen. If I leave it to the possibility of something accidentally happening to me, I have to wait until it happens. And I want to get out of that state because I want it for myself in order to grow and, you might say, to 'develop' certain things which are not developed now—or in order to become a Man, or whatever definition you want to give—the motivation has to be very clear in one. "I want to Work": Then there is no maybe about it, then I Work. I may not have very much energy for it, but I certainly at a certain time can say "I wish to Wake Up." And then I say: "I want something to Observe me. I want something to exist present to me as I am." I want that something to accept me as I am and whatever further definitions of Work you know about, but don't be wishy-washy. "Yes" or "No." And when it's "No" it's "No," it's all right—I'm not saying that everybody should try to become Conscious—but if I talk about it, then I cannot pretend.

You understand what I mean.

Bernie: I know it exactly.

Mr. Nyland: Good. I'm clear about Work, then I Work. If I don't work, I'm not clear.

Bernie: Thank you.

Mr. Nyland: All right.

Sonny Dereno: I'm Sonny Dereno, I'm presently in the men's Group.

Mr. Nyland: I didn't hear you.

Sonny: I'm Sonny Dereno...

Mr. Nyland: Yah.

Sonny: ...in the men's Group. Uh, the problem is trying to maintain a Work effort. I feel the wish is there ... and it doesn't last too long, I try it again and it goes away again.

Mr. Nyland: And then, what. Do you try it for the third time?

Sonny: Yes.

Mr. Nyland: And then it goes away again?

Sonny: And then I go away.

Mr. Nyland: And then you have to wait until it comes again?

Sonny: Oh. I try to go back to the original feeling I had about a Work attempt.

Mr. Nyland: Right.

Sonny: And, uh ... well, it wasn't there, it's not there now.

Mr. Nyland: Then the question is "What will you do?," or is there no question ... I mean, there may not be a question attached to it, it may be just simply a statement.

Sonny: No, the question is: How can I maintain for a period of time, at least a minute, a Work attempt. And that is...

Mr. Nyland: I think you have to realize that the desire for Work has to require a certain kind of energy of which, at a certain time I only have a little bit. The reason for that is that I am unconscious, and in an unconscious state I'm satisfied by using my energy for the maintenance of my unconsciousness. When I have a wish to Work it has to be based on a motivation, the motivation has to be the realization of what I am. When I look at myself—think about it in memory and recall what I have experienced or what has been my behavior—I may at that time have a certain judgment of how I was. I can say I was 'uncontrolled' or I reacted 'too quickly' or I was 'stupid' or I was 'awkward' or I did 'not fulfill' what I set out to do—I didn't keep my promise, or I was never on time—or whatever may be the motivations when one looks at one's life and there are certain things that are really, I usually call it 'not becoming' to me as a Man, and that therefore I say I want to 'grow up' to become something that is much more reliable than what I am now.

This is ... of course could be a motivation for myself to try to wish to Work. To the extent that I dislike myself, that I do not approve of the way I am, to the extent that that kind of a feeling is touched in me and the depth of it—in relation to *that* I will have a wish and I will have energy to do something about the state in which I find myself, or that I know I happen to be. If I don't have much of a wish, I don't have much of a dislike about myself; or, if I have a dislike I allow my mind to rationalize about it so that that what originally I disliked I now start to put a little water in the wine, and say "Well, after all, it is not so bad," or "It is human," or "It is my nature" or the conditions were such that "I couldn't help it," and whatever other rationalization you want to use, you simply put yourself asleep.

If the wish is there, it is exhausted after a very few moments of an attempt. There is really not a *continued* state in which you realize what you are. If there is something in you and looking at yourself and remembering how you were and how you behaved so that you can't sleep, that you can't eat, that you really feel so rotten about yourself that you consider yourself a

nincompoop and that you really feel that you as a human being do not even have ... or have any ... and you are not entitled to carry the name of 'Man'; when you feel that you are, in your growth, just beginning to grow ... and immature and stupid and you hate it, I'm quite certain that at such a time you will have a wish. When the wish is drowned out very soon, I still like myself. And it is not that I feel that a person has to base the motivation on this one particular item of liking or disliking oneself. There may be many different kinds of motivations, but I'm quite certain that whatever the motivation is, it has to be quite deep in order to produce enough energy that I can Work against the grain.

Because, what is the problem: I am unconscious and I am, from that standpoint, a stupid fool who doesn't know, and I wish for more knowledge about myself. Because that what I know about myself of course is, to some extent rationalized to the greatest height I can allow myself. I have an idea of myself which is based on a lot of nonsense many times; but I want to live with myself, so I don't want to see the things that are really in the way and that what is disagreeable for me, I put a little salve on it so that I don't have to look at it.

I am interested in a certain form for myself of having peace of mind, and there are two ways of reaching it. One is by means of establishing within myself an equilibrium so that I can deal with the rest of the world, and the other way is to fall asleep. If I don't find that I have much of a wish, I have to realize that that what I'm trying to do is to create something that is Conscious in the midst of a tremendous amount of unconscious states, and I am constantly bombarded with my mind and my feelings in an unconscious way to maintain myself, as an ordinary human being, unconsciously. And that there are constantly these kinds of conflicts in me telling me all the time "What the hell are you doing, what a fool you are even to wish to become Conscious." That is the mind telling you, "You don't have to." The mind will give you always an 'adds up.' The mind will say "Do you want self-knowledge? Just keep on thinking, you will find out." And when your heart beats it says "Don't worry, you'll get older and after you get a little bit further in life you'll become more mature, don't go through the trouble of trying to make an emotional state for the sake of reaching God too soon."

It all depends of where you live, and when there is a delay or when there is a gradually decaying influence on the quality of your wish, then you still have not enough knowledge of yourself as you really are. The only way out will be to—when you have the wish—to wish and to change it into the actuality of making an attempt; and when the attempt has run dry, to forget it

and wait until there is another wish, and whenever the wish comes to make an attempt to Work; and whenever Work is there, you will add—at least at that moment—a little bit more knowledge, truthful knowledge of yourself which, in time, will give you more of a wish.

It's not a vicious circle; but one fact is dependent on the other, and in that sense it becomes a chain: I Work in order to find out what I am; when I find out what I really am, I Work.

Sonny: When you find or feel it in the state that you are, is that the best time to make your Work attempt?

Mr. Nyland: No, I don't think so. Because when I really dislike myself, there's a tremendous amount of energy that goes into that kind of an emotional state. I think at moments when it does happen I can have a flash of my existence, but I probably will not be Impartial to it. Because, you see, I dislike it so much. When I honestly dislike myself I'm totally engaged in it and I am involved, and at that moment even if I have the thought that it would be nice if only I could Work now because such energy seems to be available, I have no way of directing it and everything goes into the fulfillment of my emotional state of disliking myself. It is good to have a motivation based on that, but it is not the proper time to try to Work. If I want to Work I will remember these states when I was so tremendously involved; and I still will remember that I hated them and I know that I should not have them—or at least I wished I wouldn't have them—and then, at such a time when I feel that I ought to be able to Work the conditions have to be much freer and I have to be in a better state ... and not being as involved, and I have to be much more relaxed.

The conditions for my Work have to become very simple. Because even the thought and the translation of my wish into a form of energy which I want to use to make an attempt to be Aware, is in the beginning very small. So I must make the conditions as good as I can, and I then will do it when I know that there is very little involvement emotionally on my part; and I try, then, to be Aware of very simple activities of myself; and with that of course I start with the activities of that what is my body and the manifestations of my body, and I leave alone the question of I would like to be Observant of my feelings, Observant of my mind. Of course, it's a good aim and I should in time, but for the beginning I have to learn first how to take the first steps on the road to Objectivity, and everything is against me.

The conditions of the outside world, everybody who is unconscious will warn me not to bother with this, my own state where I have a feeling which may be right and my mind which

tells me by association that I don't have to worry too much—all these kind of things produce in me, together with my inert laziness inherent in me, my desire to leave things just alone and that in time it will all be settled. And all the different thoughts that I have in relation to that simply prevent me from wanting to do anything—unless I'm really at times forced ... and then, when I'm so forced, then it's the wrong time.

I have to learn to see when the Sun shines that I can use the Sun, and then not think of rain. When it rains I may think of the Sun, but I cannot produce it. I have to be in a very simple state in order to apply a very simple method with very little energy that is available, and if I don't do it that way I'm really a little foolish. When you get up. When you are in a certain activity and you can afford to stop it. When you prevent yourself from remaining mechanical and there is something that you introduce and that says "Now I stop this mechanicality for one moment in order *now* to be reminded of myself *as* I am active in whatever it may be." I stand still, I can then at certain times come to myself. I can be talking and I'm involved in an argument and I want to emphasize this and that; and at a certain time I remember Work and I say "My voice" and it is an expression of myself, it is a manifestation which if I only could become Aware of it could be helpful.

Because whenever I make an attempt at being Aware, I add to the substance of my 'I'. So when I say "Here I am" and I'm talking and I'm involved and the argument is almost won—just two or three words and I have conquered—and at that time I stop and I don't talk and I simply breathe in and out; and there is my body—intense, wishing to say and not saying—at that time I can become Aware of my state and I then, not talking I can become Aware of the fact that I exist, wishing to talk but not talking. This is how I interrupt mechanicality. I walk, I stand still. I drink a cup of coffee, I don't drink it ... I wait before I drink, then I drink. When I have a spoon and a fork and a knife and I am cutting potatoes ... and I put the fork in the potato, and there I am; I love it because I'm hungry, and then I wait and I tell my body "Wait, something else: I wish to be present to this activity; I will satisfy you, my little stomach, but only when I wish."

You see what I mean? These are the simple things. I am going to see someone, I'm going to shake hands. I will meet him, he will say "Hello," I will say "Hello." When he says "Hello" I will wait, and then I say "Hell-lo." Answer the telephone: Let it ring; at other times quick!, answer it. Changing your mechanicality; becoming Aware of your body in a certain state of activity and accepting that activity for whatever it is without any further questioning; so that then

the realization of “I am this body” acting in a certain way behaving, but I know it. This is Observation: When, then, that what is being Observed is with the ‘I’ as it is, Impartially becoming Aware of me; so that my totality of unconscious states may be exactly the same as before, but something else starts to exist and is looking—that is, is actually becoming Aware.

And, *Aware*. Not thinking. Awareness means a process of a mental recording of the fact of my existence in a certain place in my brain and collecting data which, when they are pure intellectually recording, are free from any interpretation, from any associative values, from any forms of likes and dislikes of my feelings. Those are the times that will count; and then the motivation is justified in using all the energy you might say ‘covered up’ in the motivation and the reason why I wish to Work—all of it to be converted in one wish only: To be Aware, without describing what it is to be Awake.

You understand?

Sonny: I just want to ask one question: What about energy, and is it beneficial to not to tire the body and to ... sort of get the proper sleep or proper rest as to not burn up energy in ordinary life so that you can have energy to Work.

Mr. Nyland: Well, I don’t know. I think the question of having energy for Work, is really not dependent on the tiredness of your body. I think the body can be tired and require perhaps a certain amount of energy in order to recuperate, but it depends on my state—where I am in that what is my body, and myself tired or not tired—so that I’m satisfied with the state I am of my sleep. When I think that I am tired and that perhaps I would want to sleep or recuperate in order to regain the energy that has been spent—of course I become interested in that, it’s not a very good time to try to Work on myself.

But, it’s not impossible at all. Because that what is the question about wishing to Work, has nothing to do with the behavior, even, of my physical body. It may be in any kind of a state: I still have a wish, and the wish is not linked up with my body being tired. It is, of course, linked up with the quantity of energy that goes into recuperation, but I think usually a relaxation process will give me much more energy at a certain time *if* I want to use it for the purpose of being Awake. When I’m emotionally involved it’s much worse, but ordinary physical tiredness doesn’t make much difference. I sit in a chair, close my eyes, I’m tired: Can I be Aware of myself sitting? Of course I can.

All right, John?

John: I was going to turn it over.

side 2 Mr. Nyland: Yah—or are you just scratching your head and that’s all.

Yah.

Anwyl Shah: Mr. Nyland, my name is Anwyl Shah?

Mr. Nyland: Yes.

Anwyl: I’d like to know, what is the quality of self-remembering. I’ve been trying to understand that for some time, and...

Mr. Nyland: There are different words for this kind of a process, and sometimes it depends on what you want to emphasize and sometimes it’s a little bit left for the person who uses it. Self-remembering, of course, must mean that there is a process I call a ‘memory’ which then, in that memory I will remember myself. It depends on what I now understand of myself, and when it is an ordinary process of a memory as if I am remembering myself, I can be reminded of something that is a connection with myself.

When I remember myself, there may be two different ways of using it. When I say, “Don’t forget, remember yourself,” it may be that I have to become down to Earth to know that I exist. And here is me as myself, and when I say ‘come to myself,’ it means that in my unconscious state I try to connect all the different activities of the three centers and then, perhaps, to some extent unite them, but in any event I remember that I exist. It’s a very simple kind of thing which we use, of course, in ordinary life, and as such it has nothing to do with Work. Because this question of remembering myself is completely automatic, it is very definitely mechanical, and it is unconscious.

If I want to give it a connotation of a different kind I’ll say “Remember yourself,” *then* I say the ‘self’ is not that what I am now, the Self is what I Am in reality. So then I say to myself “What is there of this that is really myself,” an answer is: “Go further inside in yourself, you become clearer and clearer what is really yourself. What are you, essentially. Are you worth more, as yourself, than on the outside?” Then you say “Yes, essentially I am different because apparently there is less interference from the outside world, and there is more genuine value in my essential Being.” Then one says, “If you go further than your essence and you actually find out what is the real essence of essence, is that more yourself?” Then you say “Yes, it must be.” Because I go further and further away from the surface, I reach a state in which there is much more ease and peace with myself, and to some extent I can rely that that what is within me is a



little bit less stuck by the outside world, and because of that a little purer.

Then I say: “What is this ‘Self’ that is within.” What is it that I consider my real Self; and, if it is there now, has it always been there and were the conditions always the same way as I now find myself when this Self with a capital ‘S’ is covered with one layer after the other of ordinary culture and civilization and education. Then I say “Yes, of course: When I was young and I was not as yet spoiled ... and there was no particular indication of what you might call of being ‘educated’ young man or even an older person, but that that what I was as a child was unspoiled, it was uninhibited. It still existed—it was alive—but fortunately it didn’t know too much and it could not explain too much; and the mind was not functioning than only with a couple of sense organs, and the aliveness of this Self was much closer to the fact of my life as then it existed,” and then I say “That is my Self.”

I say it is purer than snow, it is more ethereal than the ether, it is *that* what is my Self. That “I Am,” my Self is me. And when I say I ‘remember’ my Self, then I bring back to my mind and I feel the existence of that what I really Am in my daily life; and for one moment I say “Get out”—all this kind of nonsense that is covering me—I wish to know *what* I Am for one moment. I become emotionally involved in that what is the real pearl of myself within, and in that ... *then* in that kind of almost the ‘point of gravity’ of what is life in me and what I call then ‘life’ in the most genuine and real sense of the word, *that* is my Self and I now remember. And then I say “Remember yourself,” it means What is my aim: To set that Self, which is my life, free from the bondage of Earth. Then it has an entirely different connotation: When I say “Remember myself,” surely it’s analogous to the attempt of self-Observation; although in the Observation I Observe myself as I am for the purpose of the ‘I’ existing ... which ‘I’ is a replica of myself, my real Self.

Don’t lose yourself too much in definitions of words; unless you can define it from beginning to end, and then you will see it doesn’t make very much difference as long as the concept is clear. And self-remembering [‘s’ or ‘S’] is very good to be used as a remembrance ... remembering ... but to some extent that what I wish to self-remember [‘s’ or ‘S’] will remind me to Work.

Anwyl: Thank you.

Mr. Nyland: You must ask questions. Because if you don’t, we stop. Is there a hand up there? Yah? Who.

Stand up. Yes.

Questioner: Uh...

Mr. Nyland: You can sit down. [chuckle]

Questioner: My question isn't very well formulated, but in the morning --[inaudible]-- one of them is superficiality having to do with the way I treat Work—in the way I'd like to become, for me, in making attempts—and the other one is...

Mr. Nyland: How recent are the times, and on what is there recently at the time of day.... How long?

Questioner: A long time.

Mr. Nyland: How long?

Questioner: A month.

Mr. Nyland: Not very long, is it. You know, Work is for a lifetime ... and Work is very difficult when it has to undo a lifetime, so of course it is necessary to go a little bit lower than the surface. When the attempts for Work are skin deep, don't make them. It's so useless. It's a drop in the bucket. It's trying to ladle the sea out with a spoon. It's no good. Either "Yes," or "No." No lukewarmness about Work. It doesn't matter if it's "No," it simply means I have chosen not to Work. It's good as a definition for oneself. It's good as a positive attitude. There is no requirement. If you don't say it in this life, you will say it in some other life. Your Karma at the present time is satisfied by your wish not to Work, and for the time being you won't think about it anymore because there is nothing that will cause you to gnash your teeth. But if it isn't "No" it has to be "Yes." No half-way. Lukewarmness doesn't count. Lukewarmness does not give the taste. That's why it says in the Bible "I spit it out of my mouth." The term used is 'poof'—*vehemently* getting rid of it when it is lukewarm.

This is the question: You have to look at yourself—whatever it is that you can stand, whatever you think you are entitled to and whatever you think of yourself—and to what extent you allow certain things that *are* superficial, which you know are *not* superficial in their principle; to allow for yourself to even be associated with, be honest and say "No, I don't wish," then "Stay away." If you compel yourself to come against your Will, you will never Work. If you are compelled, you've got to wish. It's far better not to wish than to have only a little bit of something that every once in a while, at a certain time you happen to call a little bit of a wish. Don't! People are not open and not closed, but a little bit open and a little bit closed and you

never can tell—I hate them. Either a person is alive or he’s dead. Not in between. No wishy-washyness about this.

So that the surface and it stays there—wash it off, forget it. And if you don’t like that, then go deeper. And then go as far as you possibly can with *all* of you ... and your whole personality becoming engaged in the intensity of this kind of an effort. Even if you do it for a certain length of time and say “For two months I’m going to Work, six months I wish because I want to find out what is it for me”—is it of value or not—after I give it an honest try, I will know. If after that time I say “It’s not for me, it doesn’t give me anything,” then you have a right. Maybe you were wrong, but it doesn’t matter, you have tried.

So when you say “In recent times I have become diluted,” why ... why stay. Get out, but if you want to come, come! But then your “Yes” is “Yes.” If the surface you don’t like, go deeper. If you are afraid that superficiality will not get you anywhere, you’re quite right; and if you are afraid that ordinary affairs and the outside world is going to rub against you and of course effaces you, you’re *also* right, and then it is only skin deep. Where is your essence. What is your spiritual life. What is really what you wish in life. Is it superficiality? Then you may as well go and do suicide and have your name in the paper and all kind of publicity and all kind of respect from ordinary people—or not so ordinary, or whatever it is that pleases your vanity—but if you wish to Work, Work in simplicity and don’t talk, even, too much about it.

But, deep down something has to be there that responds. What are we trying to do. We’re trying to find out what we are. For what: To be a little congenial to live. For what to live: Because there is life. For what do I wish to continue to live with this life: So that I want to build something in which this life can continue. I call it ‘Soul,’ and it’s not that easy to build a Soul, and surely it’s not superficial. If I really make earnest ... if I become actually interested in myself and reality, then I know that if the building of a Soul is that what is of paramount value to me, I will utilize every goddamn thing under the sun; of my body or whatever it is—that I have a brain or a feeling—in order to build something that is more worthwhile. Sometimes I say to ‘please God,’ sometimes perhaps for the ‘glory of His Endlessness,’ sometimes because I understand that if I am a spirit in that sense and I wish to remain alive, that that what I wish to protect is aliveness which belongs to God as a whole and that for me, my wish as a human being should be the Aspiration towards finally being united with God the Father.

One cannot talk about this kind of Work superficially. It doesn’t belong there. Superficial

nonsense is just a little satisfaction of curiosity. I say always “The hell with that, there is enough in ordinary life to satisfy the surface of my Being,” but I want something that is alive and can be, if possible remain and maybe at times I can consider permanent ... and hoping then that it will live forever and ever in eternity so that I, if I can remain in that kind of existence, could actually approach God and ask Him to be fused with Him because I am, then, like Him and He wishes me to see and recognize me.

Where is religion when it doesn’t mean, in my life now, a contact that I will want to establish with something that is, for me, the reason why I happen to live, and I accept the fact of my life for the purpose of setting it free, ultimately. Because, why should it be bound. This is always the problem: Why is it that a human being is a human being ... and why does he happen to be born on Earth, why shouldn’t he be an angel.

So, don’t allow superficiality to enter. You face it, you come to yourself. No one prompts you to Work—no one. Those who will tell you, will tell you after your death, and in all probability at such a time the Angel Gabriel will send you back to Earth and say “Go fulfill your Karma. You ran away from it, you’ve got to do it because it is still your life.”

You understand what I mean.

Yah.

New Questioner: The other day, um, my opportunity for Work—that is, to make an effort—to me was cut down because I’m involved with a great deal of self-criticism. And, uh...

Mr. Nyland: Why do you criticize yourself?

Questioner: I was just unconscious.

Mr. Nyland: How do you mean ‘unconscious.’ There are certain things you don’t criticize yourself about?

Questioner: Yea.

Mr. Nyland: Oh. Then at times of criticism, can you remember them?

Questioner: Yea.

Mr. Nyland: I think so. I think it’s a little nonsense to be too over-critical. Not only that, as far as Work is concerned it doesn’t make any difference; because you have to accept yourself as you are ... but it takes such energy, and what for. Why criticize. You are what you are. Many times you can’t help being what you are. You were not even responsible for it. You happen to be born on the Earth and you were taken up by the current of Earth and society and the rest of the people,

and they simply imprinted on you whatever they felt like and you took in what you couldn't help, you could not refuse it even.

So, why critical. When you have a wish for yourself to be different it's not criticism, it's a realization of what you are and using that for the purpose of wishing to grow. So you turn the criticism into the wish to grow, and for that you need material. For that you need some assurance, and you get that by looking at yourself when you're *not* critical and say "But, I am this": "I have a body, I can breathe, I am healthy; I'm strong, I can do this, I can think, I have an ability of some kind here and there, I'm even kind, I can help people; I can do all kinds of things, I even can cook or make my bed." Why be critical. You're just an ordinary human being, walking around on Earth with enough capacity to maintain yourself on Earth. The criticalness need not enter at all. Wherever you are, at what particular stage—that's where you are. Someone else is somewhere else and someone else is somewhere else—what is the difference.

If you want to compare yourself with others, let them compare *themselves* with you. If you feel that you're so critical and that you ... because of that are different from others, then start to become different within yourself and tell the others, "I have something that you don't know anything about." You tell your friends, "Be critical all you wish, I know something else, I know the way out." There is a certain form in which one becomes very definitely, regarding oneself, at ease with oneself in the acknowledgement of knowing what I am and what my limitations are. I'm not criticizing myself when I have only a certain amount of strength—that I can lift two hundred pounds and not two hundred and fifty. I say "Too bad, I'm sorry I'm not stronger," but I'm not critical.

I think the mistake is of Earth. It's the realization of what you are, and the only difficulty is you don't wish to accept it. That you have to learn: You are what you are—six foot or whatever ... and two hands, and a good son, and an ability to eat and sometimes even to talk and to behave sometimes *comme il faut* and sometimes against your Will, and a little bit of a wish which sometimes you can follow and sometimes a nice kind of a thought when you write to your mother—there's more than enough that is positive, more than enough to stand on, more than enough that you can use. Almost, I would say, more than enough energy available that it is 'up to you' to use. Who else will use it, and who will criticize you for that—to use it in certain directions so you know it might be of some use, either to yourself or to someone else.

Get rid of this nonsense of being critical. "I am that way"—so what. "But I am also..."—

so there I go, staring yourself blind with that kind of a criticism. Everybody can criticize that they haven't done what perhaps they should have done. But, why didn't they do it. Just they didn't do it—that's all. The criticism is not justified, even. Because the assumption is you could have been different, and you cannot be. In an unconscious state you are just reacting and you are mechanical. You are under a certain law, you have absolutely nothing to say about it. You're under, in the first place, the law of your own Karma; the second place, on Earth you're under the law of your horoscope; in the third place, you're under the law of the biology; in the fourth place, you're under the laws of the sociology; in the fifth place, you're under the law of your heart and whatever your mind allows you to see and to talk about. And all of that; it just happens, it just happens day after day.

It's a good thing that one finds out what it is and then says it's not enough, it's not right, I want to be different. And sure, it's quite right—I want to be different. I don't always have the right ... but I don't have to criticize. Criticism implies that I could have been different; and I cannot be different ... but when I accept myself, it's the first step to the possibility for further growth.

The acceptance for me is the past, of all my experiences. When I wish to Work I have to stand on that, that becomes my foundation to which I add, constantly, the experiences of the present going into the past. And to that I also add that what I anticipate as the future going through me and again becoming past, and I stand on it. That means I'm not interested anymore in raking it up, it's finished. Time has been used for the experience of that past, and that time for me is lost. What I wish is to utilize the time still coming to me, which at the present time ... at the present moment is to my credit. As soon as it goes through me, like through a bank it becomes my debit, it is useless, I cannot bring it back. I can bring all kind of moments to the present and, if I can, I will utilize them, but not in foolish notions about my criticism.

Let me know next week. Your attitude towards yourself must change completely. It can be quite humble. It can accept oneself for whatever one is. And say it is so small ... or the attempts I make in wishing to Work are of course very small. Because, I really don't know. I don't know what I even can expect. I don't know why I even have the wish, but still there is something in each person that says, "Maybe I should do something about myself. Maybe I should try to become Objective, maybe it will give me the answer to many riddles of my life." And then of course one Works—at least, one makes attempts.

I think we're getting towards the end of our... Huh? Yeah? So now we will have another meeting, now you must know you must prepare. Today I think you came here unprepared. Today perhaps you came out of curiosity. By this time you know me so the curiosity is filled; now, next week we can start where we now left off, we can start almost immediately without any particular kind of an introduction. There should be hundreds of arms up when you really are alive about your own life and you wish to know some kind of an answer that maybe can help you. Or, at least that in the formulation of such questions you become clear of what is really bothering you. Many times it stays in your mind and it is, of course, vague because you don't want to face it and you don't ... you just let it go.

You ask a person, "What will you be ten years from now," and the answer is, "I don't know." I don't know—almost I should say "Goddamn it, why don't you know." You *must* know. Why do you breathe. Why do you continue to maintain this life. For just an ordinary little satisfaction? Eating, drinking, and sleeping? What happens to that what is essentially yourself. Where is your spiritual life. If you believe in the possibility of something existing of your inner life, then why don't you pay attention to it. Why don't you make it grow. Why don't you make it, even, predominant in your life; so that that what you are doing in manifestation has a little bit of that kind of an essential quality, of the reality of yourself showing this is what *you* are, as distinguished, maybe, from someone else. But then at least you have an aim, at least you also have something; that at the end of the day you need not be so much ashamed, that you have made an attempt actually to try to be Awake.

If you can. Again and again you ask that question: "Why." Why do you want to. If you can believe in God that He some day will have to see you, or that you will ... some day will have to open the door and there will be God sitting, and He expects you ... and he will expect you to give some kind of an account of the different talents with which you happen to appear on Earth, and He will ask you what to do with them:

"Ten."

You made ten—"Good."

"Five."

You made five—"Good."

"One."

You made one—"Good."

But you with the talent—"Oh, I buried it."

"Get out," He will say, "into the deepest darkness."

This is a question of your responsibility, a question of gradually developing a Conscience in your life, gradually becoming a Man; of a person who can stand straight, upright, stretching his hands towards God, wishing to live like a Man must live. Because Man is in that sense the acme of creation and he's worth more in the Organic Kingdom than any other kind of a form of life; and because of that and because Man can happen to think a little and he can formulate and he can go deep down into his emotion, he can gradually get for him certain verities that will actually help him to continue to live in the right way; knowing that that what is needed for him is the application of just a few little principles, and then to have perseverance and wish to continue to build, as I said before, your Soul.

It becomes very important to consider what is your Soul, and again ask "Why." Why should Man build a Soul. Why shouldn't God give it to him. He has given you once your life wherever it came from; and you can rationalize and say "Yes, but my father and mother—so what," but you take it at a certain time in your life, if you don't you remain an animal ... and an animal is even instinctively, then, more conscious than you are. But if you come to the point of decision "What is responsibility for me," you will take your life in both your hands and you carry it, and you cherish it, and you will be tender towards it. You will protect it and you hope that ultimately somehow or other through your efforts it will be set free, and *that* you present it to God. Because that He will recognize. He will not recognize your body. He will recognize that what is the aliveness in you. That is what your body is filled with. Your body is the form, it will dissolve, it will be destroyed; it doesn't matter when that what is alive in it remains, and one hopes to come to the experience that it remains in eternity.

So, goodnight, I'll see you next week.

End of tape